

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL AMERICAN REPUBLIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS

XMT AMEMBASSY PANAMA

UNCLAS STATE 053662

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SECSTATE WASHDC INFO USUN NEW YORK,
MEXICO CITY MARCH 22, 1973 FROM PANAMA IS REPEATED TO YOU:
QUOTE

UNCLAS PANAMA 1605

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PFOR PN UNSC

SUBJ: TEXT OF SPEECH ON EXPLANATION OF VETO VOTE

AT SC MEETING IN PANAMA

FROM USDEL

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF SPEECH DELIVERED 21 MARCH BY
AMBASSADOR SCALI IN EXPLANATION OF NEGATIVE VOTE ON DRAFT RES
S/10931 (PANAMA CANAL RES):

MR. PRESIDENT,
DESPITE THE FACT THAT THE REPRESENTATIVE OF PANAMA
HAS EXPRESSED HIMSELF NUMEROUS TIMES BEFORE THIS COUNCIL
OVER THE PAST WEEK ON THE PANAMA CANAL, HE DECIDED TO GIVE
HIS VERSION OF THE STORY AND THE TRUE SITUATION EXISTING AT
THE PRESENT TIME. I DO NOT INTEND TO SUBJECT THE
DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF THIS COUNCIL TO A STATEMENT OF SIMILAR
LENGTH.

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HOWEVER, HE CONTINUES TO STRESS THE CONVENTION OF
1903. IN FACT WE HAVE HEARD A GREAT DEAL IN RECENT

DAYS OF HOW THE ISTHMIAN CANAL CONVENTION WAS "IMPOSED" ON THE PEOPLE OF PANAMA. LET US PUT THE FACTS OF THE SITUATION IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL RECORD. AFTER THE CONVENTION OF 1903 WAS SIGNED, IT WAS SENT TO PANAMA FOR RATIFICATION. AFTER RATIFICATION BY THE PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENT, THE TREATY WAS SENT AROUND THE COUNTRY FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE VARIOUS ELECTED MUNICIPAL COUNCILS. THE RATIFICATION OF THE TREATY WITH THE UNITED STATES WAS OVERWHELMINGLY APPROVED BY THESE ELECTED COUNCILS, WITH UNANIMOUS EXPRESSIONS OF APPROVAL OF THE TREATY. SO MUCH FOR THE IMPOSITION OF A TREATY.

NOW IN 70 YEARS TIME THE VIEWS OF THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF PANAMA HAVE CHANGED WITH RESPECT TO THE ARRANGEMENTS OF 1903. THAT IS NOT SURPRISING. THE VIEWS OF THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA HAVE ALSO CHANGED WITH RESPECT TO THE TREATY OF 1903. THAT IS WHAT OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS ARE NEGOTIATING ABOUT -- TO WORK OUT NEW ARRANGEMENTS TO MEET THE JUST ASPIRATIONS OF PANAMA AND THE LEGITIMATE INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES.

I BELIEVE, MR. PRESIDENT, IT IS USEFUL TO CLARIFY FOR THE RECORD THIS HISTORICAL ASPECT OF OUR RELATIONSHIP.

WE REGRET HAVING HAD TO CAST A NEGATIVE VOTE ON THIS RESOLUTION BECAUSE THERE IS SO MUCH IN IT WITH WHICH WE COULD AGREE. BUT OUR NEGATIVE VOTE SHOULD HAVE COME AS NO SURPRISE TO OUR HOST, THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA, IN VIEW OF THE REPEATED EXCHANGES OF VIEWS THAT WE HAVE HAD ABOUT THIS MEETING, AND ABOUT HOW IT MIGHT END -- AND I AM REFERRING NOT ONLY TO DISCUSSIONS DURING THIS SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING BUT ALSO TO THOSE THAT TOOK PLACE EVEN BEFORE THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA HAD PRESSED ITS CAMPAIGN TO HAVE THIS MEETING TAKE PLACE ON ITS TERRITORY.

IN THOSE DISCUSSIONS THE UNITED STATES MADE CLEAR ITS SERIOUS CONCERN THAT A MEETING DESIGNED TO PUT PRESSURE ON ONE PARTY TO AN ON-GOING BILATERAL NEGOTIATION COULD MAKE THOSE NEGOTIATIONS MORE DIFFICULT AND IMPAIR THE UTILITY OF THIS MAJOR ORGAN OF THE UNITED NATIONS. UP TO UNCLASSIFIED

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THE MOMENT OF OUR DEPARTURE FOR PANAMA WE CONTINUED TO RECEIVE ASSURANCES THAT EVERYTHING WOULD BE DONE TO MAINTAIN AN ATMOSPHERE OF MODERATION AND RESTRAINT. I REGRET TO SAY THAT, WHILE THIS PROVED TRUE OF THE SITUATION OUTSIDE THIS CHAMBER -- AND FOR THIS I WISH TO EXPRESS OUR APPRECIATION TO OUR HOST -- IT HAS NOT BEEN TRUE OF SOME OF THE STATEMENTS MADE HERE. MEMBERS OF THIS COUNCIL SHOULD KNOW THAT MY DELEGATION HAS MADE STRENUOUS AND REPEATED EFFORTS IN FRIENDLY CONVERSATIONS WITH OUR PANAMANIAN HOSTS TO ARRIVE AT A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE FORM FOR A

RESOLUTION, BUT THIS VERY SINCERE EFFORT HAS BEEN REJECTED. I WISH THE MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL TO KNOW, HOWEVER, THAT WE WERE, AND ARE PREPARED TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE JUST ASPIRATIONS OF THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA, FOR WE DO RECOGNIZE THOSE ASPIRATIONS, ALONG WITH THE INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES.

I HAVE SAID THAT WE REGRET HAVING HAD TO CAST A NEGATIVE VOTE ON THE PANAMANIAN RESOLUTION BECAUSE THERE IS SO MUCH IN IT WITH WHICH WE COULD AGREE. AS I HAVE MADE CLEAR, WE AGREE WITH THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA ON THE NEED TO REPLACE THE 1903 CONVENTION BY TOTALLY NEW INSTRUMENT REFLECTING A NEW SPIRIT; WE AGREE THAT SUCH A NEW INSTRUMENT SHOULD NOT RUN " IN PERPETUITY" BUT SHOULD HAVE A FIXED TERM, AND AGREE ON THE PROGRESSIVE INTEGRATION INTO THE LEGAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE OF PANAMA OF EVEN THOSE AREAS USED FOR THE OPERATION AND DEFENSE OF THE CANAL. WHY, THEN, WHEN THERE IS SO MUCH IN IT WITH WHICH WE AGREE, DID WE NOT VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE RESOLUTION OR, AS WE WERE URGED, AT LEAST OBSTAIN? ESSENTIALLY, FOR TWO REASONS.

FIRST AND FOREMOST, AS I HAVE REPEATEDLY POINTED OUT BOTH IN PUBLIC AND IN PRIVATE, IT IS BECAUSE ALL THESE MATTERS ARE IN PROCESS OF BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS. WE DO NOT CONSIDER IT HELPFUL OR APPROPRIATE FOR THE SECURITY COUNCIL TO ADOPT A RESOLUTION DEALING WITH MATTERS OF SUBSTANCE IN A CONTINUING NEGOTIATION -- AND I MAY NOTE THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF PANAMA HAS HIMSELF SPOKEN OF THE NEGOTIATIONS AS CONTINUING AND NOT AS HAVING BEEN BROKEN OFF. INDEED, AS MANY MEMBERS KNOW WE HAVE ONLY UNCLASSIFIED

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RECENTLY MADE CERTAIN NEW APPROACHES TO THE GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA. WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE A DISSERVICE TO THE NEGOTIATIONS AND AN IMPROPER USE OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL IF BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS WERE SUBJECTED TO THIS KIND OF OUTSIDE PRESSURE.

I AM NOT, OF COURSE, SUGGESTING HERE THAT THOSE WHO CAST AFFIRMATIVE VOTES ON THE RESOLUTION INTENDED TO EXERT ANY IMPROPER INFLUENCE, BUT THIS IS HOW THE RESOLUTION WOULD HAVE BEEN PERCEIVED IN MANY QUARTERS.

PANAMANIAN RESOLUTION, IN OUR VIEW, IS UNBALANCED AND INCOMPLETE AND IS THEREFORE SUBJECT TO SERIOUS MISINTERPRETATION. MOREOVER THE RESOLUTION IS CAST IN THE FORM OF SWEEPING GENERALITIES WHEN WE KNOW THAT THE REAL DIFFICULTIES LIE IN THE APPLICATION OF THESE GENERALITIES. ALTHOUGH IT IS TRUE THAT THE UNITED STATES

AND PANAMA HAVE REACHED COMMON UNDERSTANDING OVER A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT GENERAL PRINCIPLES, DIFFERENCES OVER SOME PRINCIPLES AND MANY MATTERS OF DETAIL REMAIN. FINALLY, THE PRESENT RESOLUTION ADDRESSES THE POINTS OF INTEREST TO PANAMA BUT IGNORES THOSE LEGITIMATE INTERESTS IMPORTANT TO THE UNITED STATES.

THE PANAMA CANAL IS NOT A WORK OF NATURE, OR AS SOME HAVE TRIED TO PUT IT -- A "NATURAL RESOURCE". THE CANAL IS A VERY COMPLEX ENTERPRISE, AND THE WORKING- OUT OF A NEW REGIME FOR IT CANNOT BE ACCOMPLISHED BY THE WAVE OF A HAND OR THE QUICK STROKE OF A PEN; IT REQUIRES THOUGHTFUL AND METICULOUS NEGOTIATION TO ACHIEVE A FAIR RECONCILIATION OF INTERESTS. WE HAVE BEEN AND ARE PREPARED FOR SUCH A NEGOTIATION. BUT THE RESOLUTION THAT WAS JUST VOTED UPON OVER SIMPLIFIES THE ISSUE TO THE POINT WHERE IT COULD HAVE RENDERED A DISSERVICE.

THIS BRINGS ME BACK TO WHAT I SAID AT THE BEGINNING OF MY INTERVENTION. I HAS BEEN CLEAR FROM THE FIRST MENTION OF THE IDEA THAT HOLDING A SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING HERE TO FOCUS ON THIS PROBLEM COULD COMPLICATE THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATION. THE UNITED STATES IS DISAPPOINTED THAT OTHERS FAILED TO APPRECIATE THIS RISK WHEN LENDING THEIR SUPPORT TO THIS MEETING. SURELY IT UNCLASSIFIED

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SHOULD HAVE BEEEN OBVIOUS THAT THE NEW TREATY, WHICH WE EARNESTLY WISH TO NEGOTIATE WITH PANAMA, MUST BE ACCEPTABLE TO OUR CONGRESS AND PEOPLE, AS WELL AS THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF PANAMA.

FINALLY, I WOULD RESPECTFULLY SUGGEST THAT WE ALL ASSESS WITH GREAT CARE THE NATURE AND OUTCOME OF THIS MEETING SO AS TO AVOID ANY REPETITION OF A COURSE OF ACTION THAT COULD PROVE DAMAGING TO THE ROLE AND REPUTATION OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL. IT WOULD BE MOST UNFORTUNATE IF THE SECURITY COUNCIL WERE TO BE TRANSFORMED INTO A SMALL REPLIC OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, THEREBY IMPAIRING ITS CAPACITY TO DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH SPECIFIC ISSUES AFFECTING PEACE AND SECURITY.

THE UNITED STATES DELEGATION WILL NOT BE LEAVING PANAMA IN A SPIRIT OF RANCOR, FAR FROM IT. OUR FRIENDSHIP FOR PANAMA, FOR THE PEOPLE OF PANAMA AND OF LATIN AMERICA IN GENERAL, IS TOO DEEP FOR THAT. WE CONTINUE TO BE WILLING TO ADJUST ANY DIFFERENCES PEACEFULLY AND IN A SPIRIT OF GIVE- AND- TAKE. WE ARE, SPECIFICALLY, PREPARED TO CONTINUE THE NEGOTIATIONS, AND TO CARRY THEM FORWARD WITH GOODWILL AND SERIOUSNESS, AT WHATEVER, TIME THE GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA CHOOSES. WE BELIEVE THAT BOTH

PANAMA AND THE UNITED STATES ARE DESTINED BY GEOGRAPHY
AND COMMON IDEALS TO COOPERATE FOR THEIR MUTUAL ADVANTAGE
AND TO PROTECT THE INTERESTS OF WORLD COMMERCE TRANSITING
THE CANAL. THAT WILL CONTINUE TO BE THE POLICY OF THE
UNITED STATES AND I AM CONFIDENT THAT IN THE END WE
SHALL REACH AN ACCORD WHICH BOTH GOVERNMENTS CAN FIRMLY
SUPPORT AND WHICH WILL STRENGTHEN THE CLOSE BONDS OF
FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN OUR PEOPLES.
SAYRE UNQUOTE ROGERS

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